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from a pepper tree to have drop at my feet one flecked all over with pure white feathers, particularly on the red breast, giving it a beautiful effect. The white feathers seemed to be much worn on the edges as though cut. This proved to be a female in good condition. Many of the birds of the high Sierras have been driven down nearer the coast than usual this winter. Mountain Bluebirds have been noticed for the first time in ten years. They spend their time hovering on the wing much like the Sparrow Hawks, over the early-sowed grain fields near the Bay shores. Their last appearance was Nov. 1, 1889. Observed this year on Feb. 11, 1899.

W. OTTO EMERSON, Haywards, Cal., Feb. 20, 1899.

**California Clapper Rail in Alameda Co.** It would be a wise move for the Supervisors of Alameda county to declare a closed season, or two successive closed seasons, on Rail. This is the only means of preventing this fine bird, now almost absent from our marshes, from becoming annihilated. The abundance of birds after two closed seasons several years ago demonstrated the wisdom of such a law. All the sportsmen I have spoken to on this subject are heartily in favor of a closed or much shortened open season. Time, trouble and boat hire are now wasted and even the dog doesn't see any sport in returning empty-handed after a tramp through the salt grass and sticky mud.

D. A. COHEN, Alameda, Cal.

**Western Evening Grosbeak in Santa Clara Co., Cal.** January 2, 1899 there appeared within the limits of San Jose, Cal., a flock of Western Evening Grosbeaks, (*Coccothraustes vespertinus montanus*) one of which, a male, was procured.

Jan. 17, a friend brought me two more males for identification. They were shot from a small flock in an orchard three miles southwest of San Jose. The birds were fat and oily, their stomachs containing buds of trees. At this time the weather was warm and there was but little snow upon the mountains. So far as I know, this constitutes a record for Santa Clara county, it being the first recorded appearance of this alpine species in the valley. ERNEST ADAMS, San Jose, Cal.



### The Myrtle Warbler in California and Description of a New Race.

BY RICHARD C. MCGREGOR.

THE Myrtle Warbler has been recorded as an occasional visitant along the whole Pacific Coast of the United States from San Francisco north, while its breeding haunts have been located in British Columbia,<sup>1</sup> and by Mr. C. H. Townsend<sup>2</sup> it was found breeding on the Kowak River in Alaska. Baird says "Stragglers were seen on Puget Sound and one was taken by Dr. Suckley at Fort Steilacoom, W. T. May 1, 1856."<sup>3</sup> The check-list gives it as "straggling more or less commonly westward to the Pacific."<sup>4</sup>

By Mr. Belding this species is recorded from the following localities: Willamette Valley, Nicasio, Alameda and Contra Costa counties, Haywards, Murphys, Stockton, Marysville and Summit. He also says "In fall and winter it (Myrtle Warbler) is not easily distinguished from Audubon's Warbler and being much less numerous than the latter, is likely to be overlooked in California."<sup>5</sup> In the middle west I find this warbler recorded from Boerne, South-western Texas, in spring;<sup>6</sup> Colorado, 9000 feet in spring;<sup>7</sup> South-eastern Dakota in spring and summer migration<sup>8</sup>, abundant migrant in western Manitoba<sup>9</sup>.

I have taken the Myrtle Warbler near Denver, Colorado during spring migration. During the past year Mr. T. J. Hoover has taken near Palo Alto about thirty warblers of which thirteen are easily recognizable as *Dendroica coronata*, the others being *D. auduboni*. Besides those collected by him, Mr.

1. Belding's Land Birds Pac. Dist. 210. 2. Auk. IV, 13. 3. Birds N. Am. 272. 4. A. O. U. Check-list, 257. 5. Land Birds Pac. Dist. 210. 6. Auk. I, 121. 7. Ibid. II, 15. 8. Ibid. II, 278. 9. Ibid. III, 326.

Hoover has three Myrtle Warblers as follows: Berryessa, Beck; Sonoma, Feb. 2, 1897, Carriger; Battle Creek, Oct. 8, 1898, ♀ McGregor. From these records it seems that *D. coronata* is distributed throughout the territory west of the Mississippi. There is little doubt that a more careful examination in this region will place the Myrtle among our common migrant species.

The following MS. notes on the Myrtle Warbler as observed near Palo Alto, kindly furnished by Mr. Hoover are of interest in this connection: "Last spring I several times noticed a small black and white warbler which was at first referred to *Dendroica nigrescens*, but when secured, three examples proved to be *D. coronata* in which the spring moult was nearly completed. Two of these, male and female, were shot on April 10 in small bushes along San Francisquito Creek and one male April 16 near the same spot. Two others were seen April 9. Further observation may show that this warbler is a regular spring migrant, instead of accidental as heretofore recorded."

Mr. H. Ward Carriger of Sonoma, California has permitted me to incorporate his notes also in my present paper. Mr. Carriger says:

"Previous to the year 1896 I had never secured any specimens of this bird but found them quite common during that year. They were first noticed along a creek in the valley and it was their note which first attracted attention. I secured two specimens on Jan. 21, which appeared to be young of the year. After this date they were common and twenty or more could be seen whenever I visited the hills, where they seemed to stay more than the Audubon's. They were common in 1897, and at the present time (Dec. 1898) are as abundant as Audubon's. There is some difference in the call notes of the two warblers, but both arrive and leave together."

Having compared a fairly good series of eastern and western skins, I have found no difference in colors or markings between the two lots, but there is such a discrepancy in wing and tail lengths, both for males and females, that I believe the western bird may be recognized as having subspecific rank. I will therefore suggest that the new race be known as:

### ***Dendroica coronata hooveri* subsp. nov. HOOVER'S WARBLER.**

*Subsp. char.* In colors and markings like *Dendroica coronata*, but with wing and tail much longer.

*Type*, No. 1988, ♂ ad. Coll. T. J. Hoover, Palo Alto, California, April 16, 1898. In summer plumage. Above bluish-slate, streaked with black; top of head more finely streaked; crown, rump and sides with patches of lemon yellow; superciliary stripe, eyelids, throat, belly, spots behind nostrils, two bars on wings and spot on inner web of three outer tail feathers, white; cheeks and lores, black; feathers of breast black centered. Wing, 3.00; tail 2.31; exposed culmen, .38.

*Geog. Dist.* Western United States, breeding probably in British Columbia and Alaska.

The presence or absence of yellow on the throat is quite sufficient to distinguish spring examples of *D. auduboni* and *D. hooveri*, but with fall or winter specimens this mark is not so evident, when the following diagnoses may be of help.

Throat, yellow; white patch on wing; white of tail on *four or five* outer feathers; a white spot on each eyelid; no white spot in front of eye; lores, bluish ash.

*auduboni.*

Throat, white; two white bands on wings; white spots of tail on *three* outer feathers; eyelids and a superciliary stripe, white; the latter often interrupted in front of eye; lores, black.

*hooveri.*

None of these characters alone are enough to identify winter birds; all of the differences must be considered before passing on a specimen. The table of measurements shows the relative sizes of males and females of eastern and western forms. I have also given measurements of five males of Audubon's Warbler. No material from the middle west has been available for the present paper so that the eastern range of the new race remains to be determined. It will probably be found to intergrade with *D. coronata*.